

**Fil-Am named California  
lieutenant governor  
BY JENNIE L. ILUSTRE  
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WASHINGTON – Mona Pasquil recently was named interim lieutenant governor of California, the second Filipino American to hold such a position.

The first was Benjamin Jerome "Ben" Cayetano who was lieutenant governor of the State of Hawaii in 1986 and was elected for a second term in 1990. Cayetano was elected governor from 1994 to 2002.

According to the Asian American Action Fund, a political action committee based in this U.S. capital, Pasquil is the second Asian American woman and third Asian American in the nation's history to hold the position.

Pasquil is a veteran political strategist and former western political director for the White House Office of Political Affairs during President Bill Clinton's administration.

She was chief of staff to California Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi.

By precedent, she assumed his position last month when he won the recent special elections to replace Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger can appoint a new lieutenant governor, and the State Legislature has 90 days to confirm or reject his choice. The process begins when the legislature reconvenes in regular session in January. Schwarzenegger, however, can call a special session.

The lieutenant governor has authority over decisions made at the State Lands Commission, the Board of Regents of the California State University and University of California and other panels and boards.

For nearly 30 years, Pasquil has been at the center of major Democratic campaigns.

She served as political director for twice-elected California Gov. Gray Davis and California political director for presidential campaign of Vice President Al Gore.

She was deputy CEO for the 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles.

She served in the Democratic National Committee from 2003 to 2009.

Pasquil is currently in Hawaii with her parents, but in earlier brief email interviews from California, she expressed pride for her roots, saying, "To make a long story short, I'm Visayan!"

She said her paternal grandfather, Cornelio Sr., was a veteran, a Philippine Scout stationed at Ft. Riley, Kansas. She said her grandmother, Simeona, immigrated from Cebu.

Her maternal grandparents are from Talingting, Siquijor.

Community and civic involvement is in Pasquil's genes. Her father, Cornelio Pasquil is a popular jazz pianist. Her mother, Constanca is a community leader.

Pasquil is particularly proud of her work mentoring California's youth to become more active in political and civic work.

